

# Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss?

Carley Zarzeka

“Documents submitted to the Faculty of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of the Master of Fine Arts in the Department of Art”

2018

Approved by: Hong-An Truong (Chair)  
Joy Cox  
Katherine Guinness  
elin o'Hara slavick

© 2018  
Carley Zarzeka  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED



Carley Zarzeka  
Artist Statement

Objects are time stamps; markers of place, class, and culture. *What happens when we intervene upon their existence, repurpose their use or mimic their collapse? How does the paint roller feel when it is squeezed by an egg-slicer? Does it feel emasculated? Liberated? When does an object's life end? Does its life end?* These are questions that direct my interactions with the objects that make up my work.

Though sculptural and installation-based practice, *Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss?* investigates the standardization of construction materials in the United States and their relationship to the domestic space. An assemblage of found objects, including building supplies, are employed in the service of these sometimes precarious constructions. This exploration also highlights how standardization has become essential in the world of product design and in the spaces in which these objects reside. Ultimately, by intentionally sourcing generic objects to use in the sculptures, the work simultaneously operates on both a universal and personal level.

Collect and build, disassemble and preserve, coerce and release – the tension between these actions is central to my practice. One example of how this oscillation has become integral in my process is in the construction of my work, *Sale*. For months, multiple times each day, I drove by a faded “Home for Sale” sign at the end of my street. This sign became a guide, sending me on my way every morning and welcoming my home at night. On a day no different than any other, I veered into the right-hand turn lane and began to turn up my street when I stopped, kidnapped the sun-washed sign and proceeded to my studio. In a cyclonic moment of cutting, spraying, binding and balancing the piece was complete. By removing the sign from its intended location and stripping it from its predetermined purpose, I interrogate its prescribed meaning. In placing the sign atop a squat L-shaped shelf I am extracting it from patterns of domestic use, calling attention to its meaning as an overdetermined symbol of domesticity, and redefining its prescribed utility.

Although they operate in this doubled way, the materials that I use in my work are familiar, but not inherently personal. Instead of using intimate or private objects, say from my childhood, I scour for and collect items that together construct a framework of time and place; an identity, not of myself but of the generic. I believe that by using everyday objects like outlet plugs and pasta strainers, the work cannot be biographical or specific, but can serve as an entry point into other biographies, other specifications beyond my own. My work is not about my life, but about aiming for individualism, yet faltering due to unconscious, generic consumerism.

While formal strategies of line, gravity, and balance govern the compositions of each work, it is not until I remove the object from its original context that I see the potential in disguising it as a serious formal element in a piece. By extracting a domestic object such as an outlet plug or a pasta strainer and treating it as a relic of design, my work disrupts our normalized perception of the things we rely on, whether we choose to acknowledge it or not.

# Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss?

MFA Thesis Presentation

Carley Zarzeka



*Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss? (Installation), 2018*





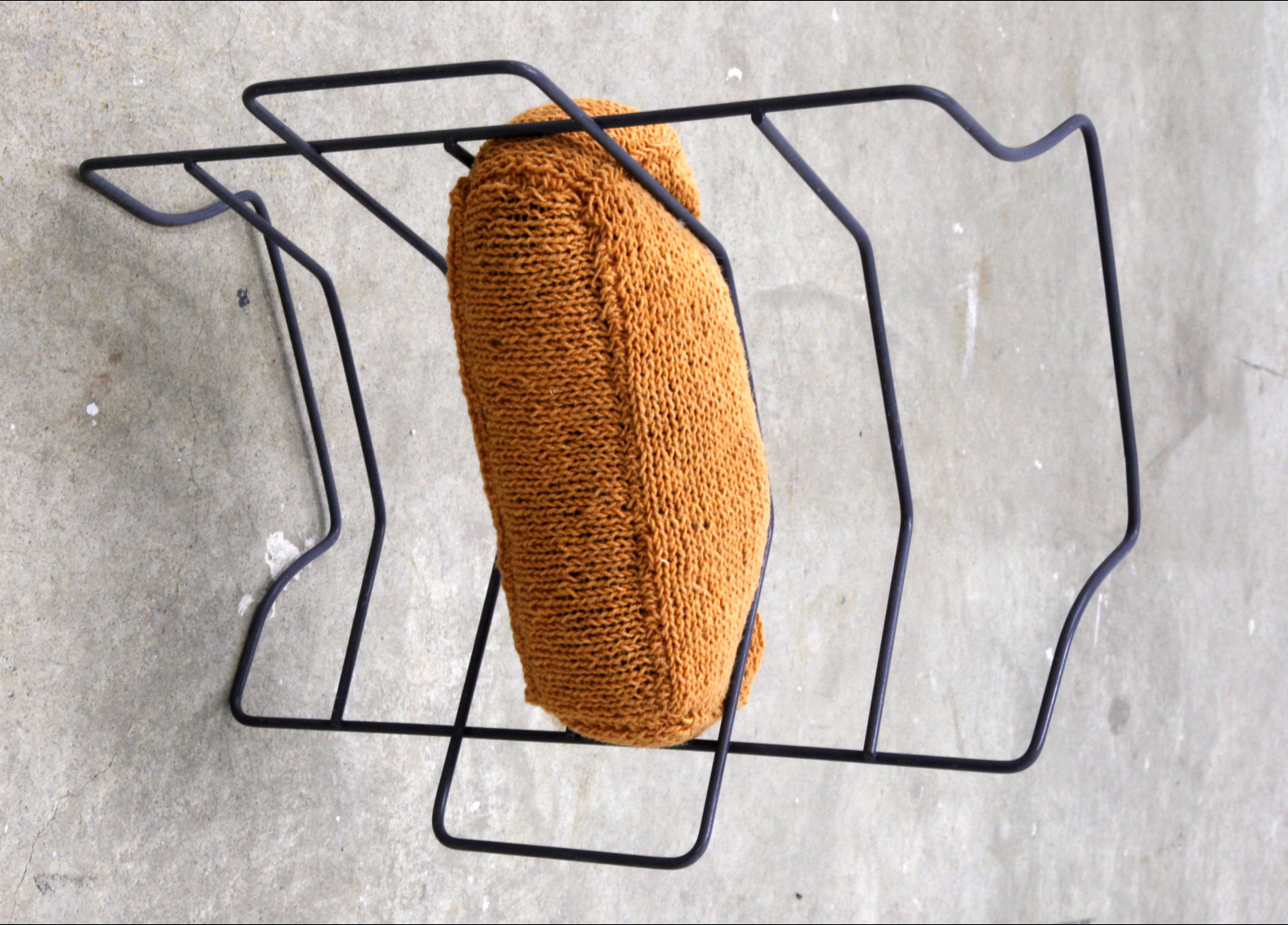
Maning, 2017

*Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss?, 2018*



“Indeed, meaning is language, but being its abstraction it cannot be seen. Despite this, in the current use of language one sees and hears only meaning. It is because the use of language is a very abstract operation, in which at every turn in the production of meaning its form disappears. For when language takes form, it is lost in the literal meaning. It can only reappear abstractly as language while re-doubling itself, while forming a figurative meaning, a figure of speech.” - Monique Wittig





*Form, 2018*





*Form, 2018*





*Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss? (installation) , 2018*



## List of Titles:

>How to fail

>Post-Lost

>endangered abundance take care of your own bird

>is a call to pressure a loss of circulation?

>abides

>cognitive dissonance register the trademark

>homeless archives

>quick to clip

>where lost hugs go

>But not quite

>empty headed, but not empty headed

>UNDER CONSTRUCTION

>CLOSED FOR RENEVATIONS / other field/disco

>UNDER RENEVATION

soft goods fundamental

# Titles

Portal

enter/exit  
slipknot





*Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss?*  
(installation) , 2018





Lowe's





Home Depot





Waning, 2017





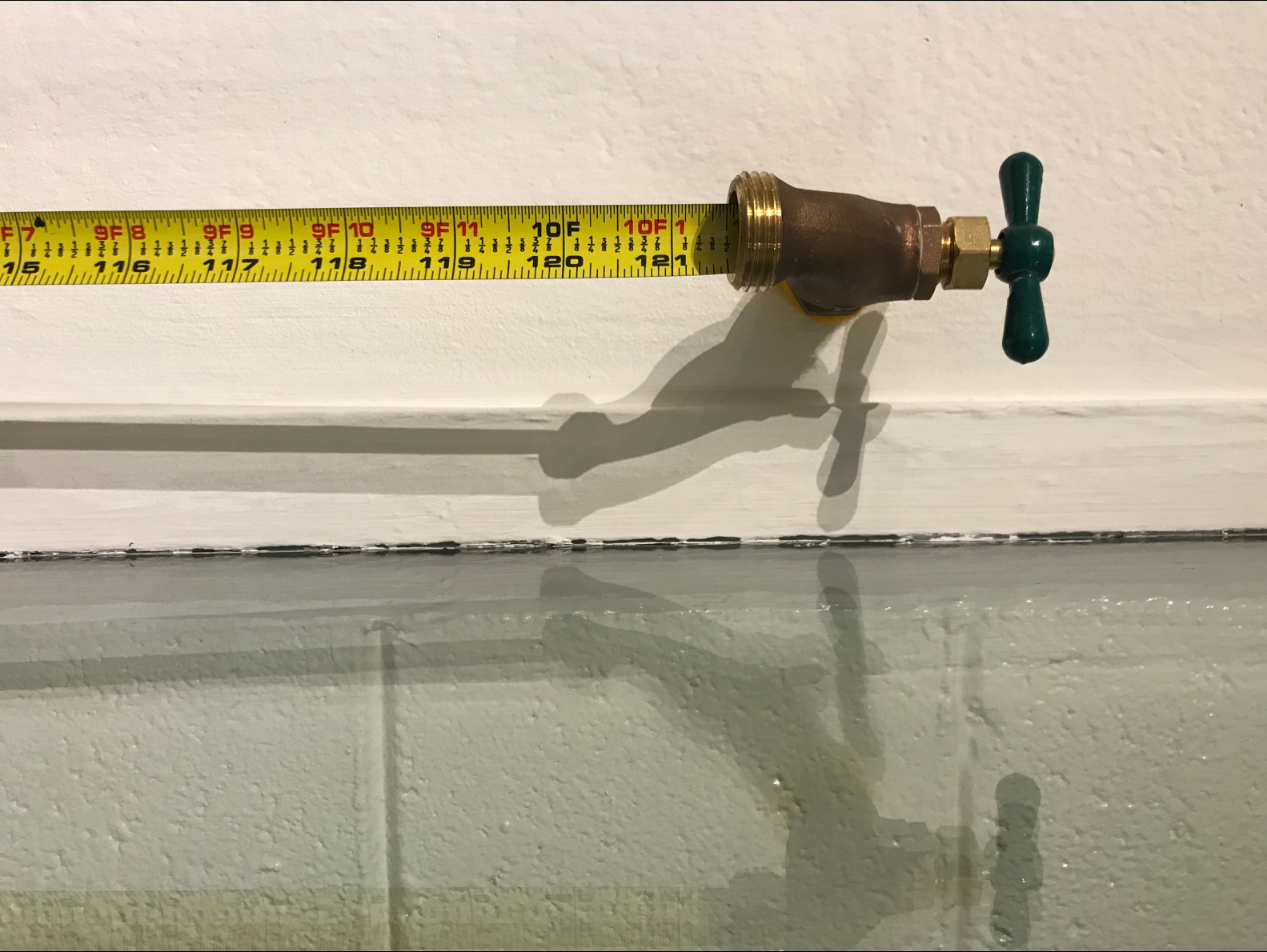
The Scrap Exchange, Durham, NC





The Scrap Exchange, Durham, NC





*Portion, 2018*



*Function, 2018*



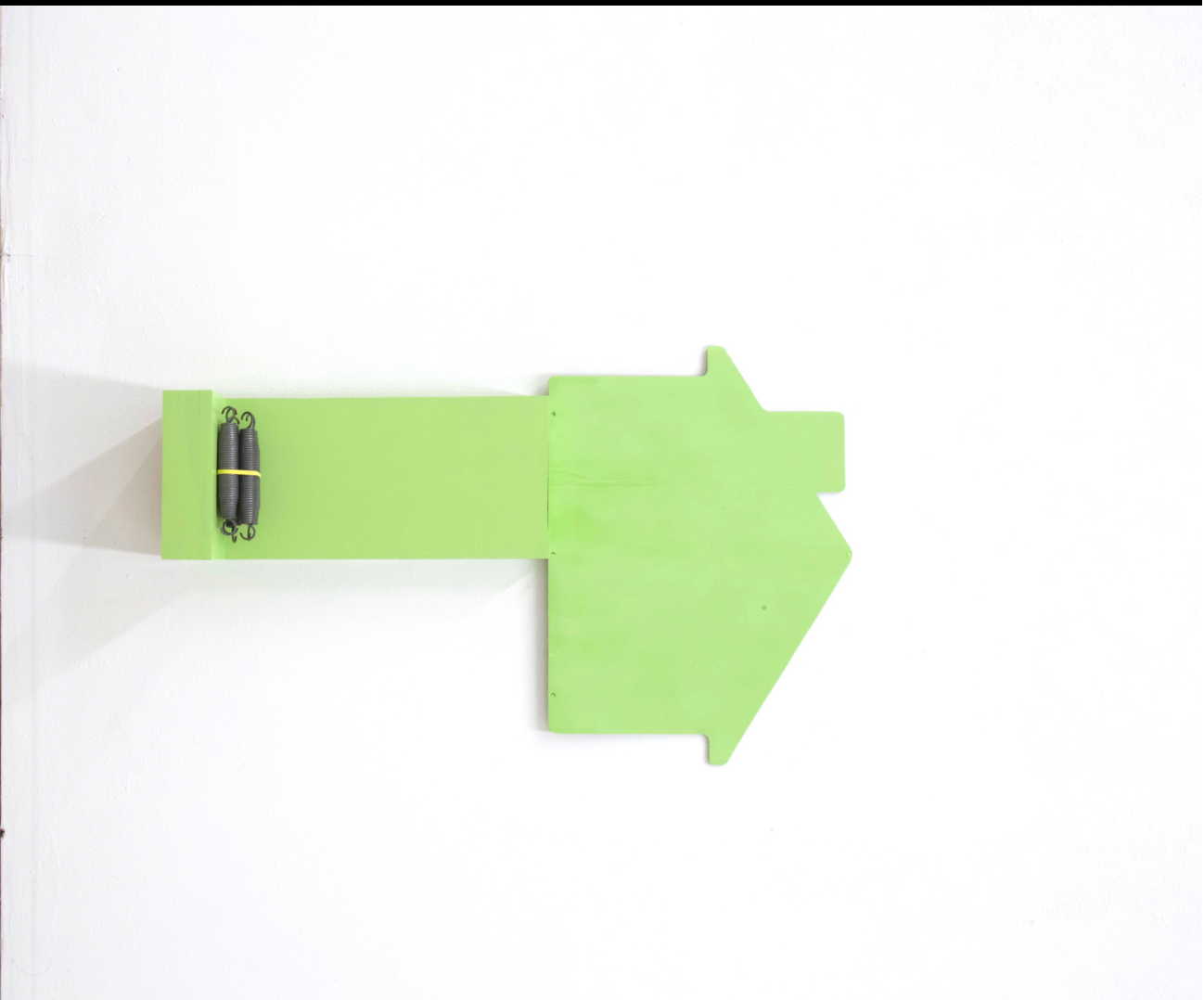


*Function (detail), 2018*



Studio

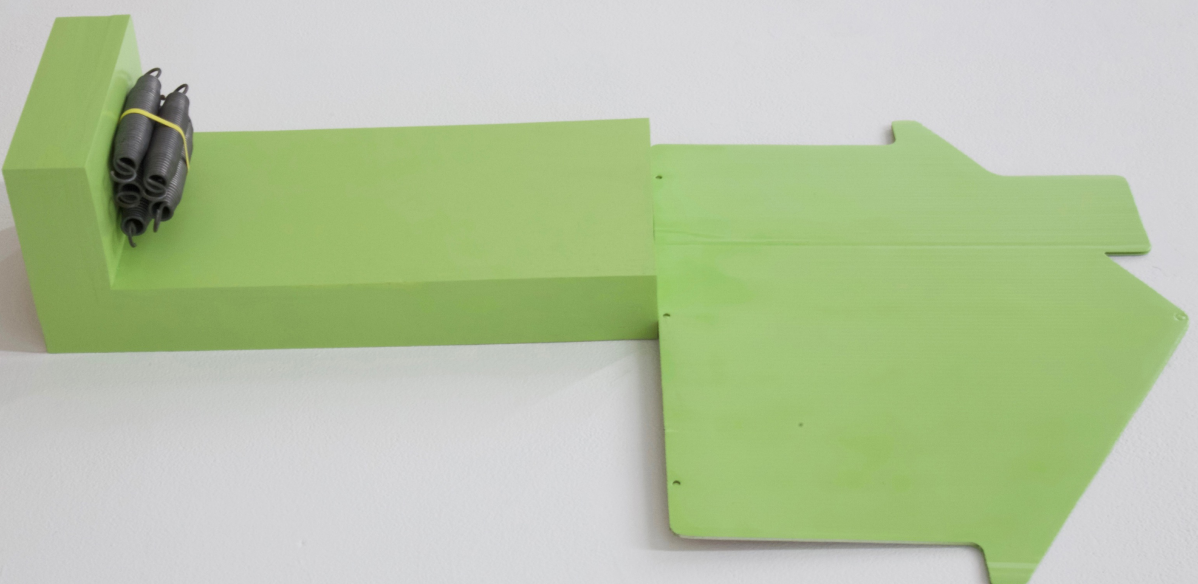




*Sale, 2018*

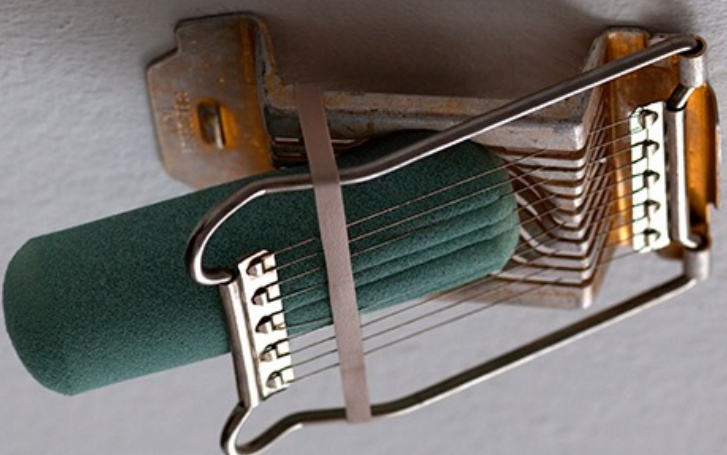
*Sale (detail), 2018*





Sale, 2018





*Ingredient, 2018*





*Ingredient, 2018*

*Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss? (installation), 2018*







*Choke, 2017*



*Comma, 2017*

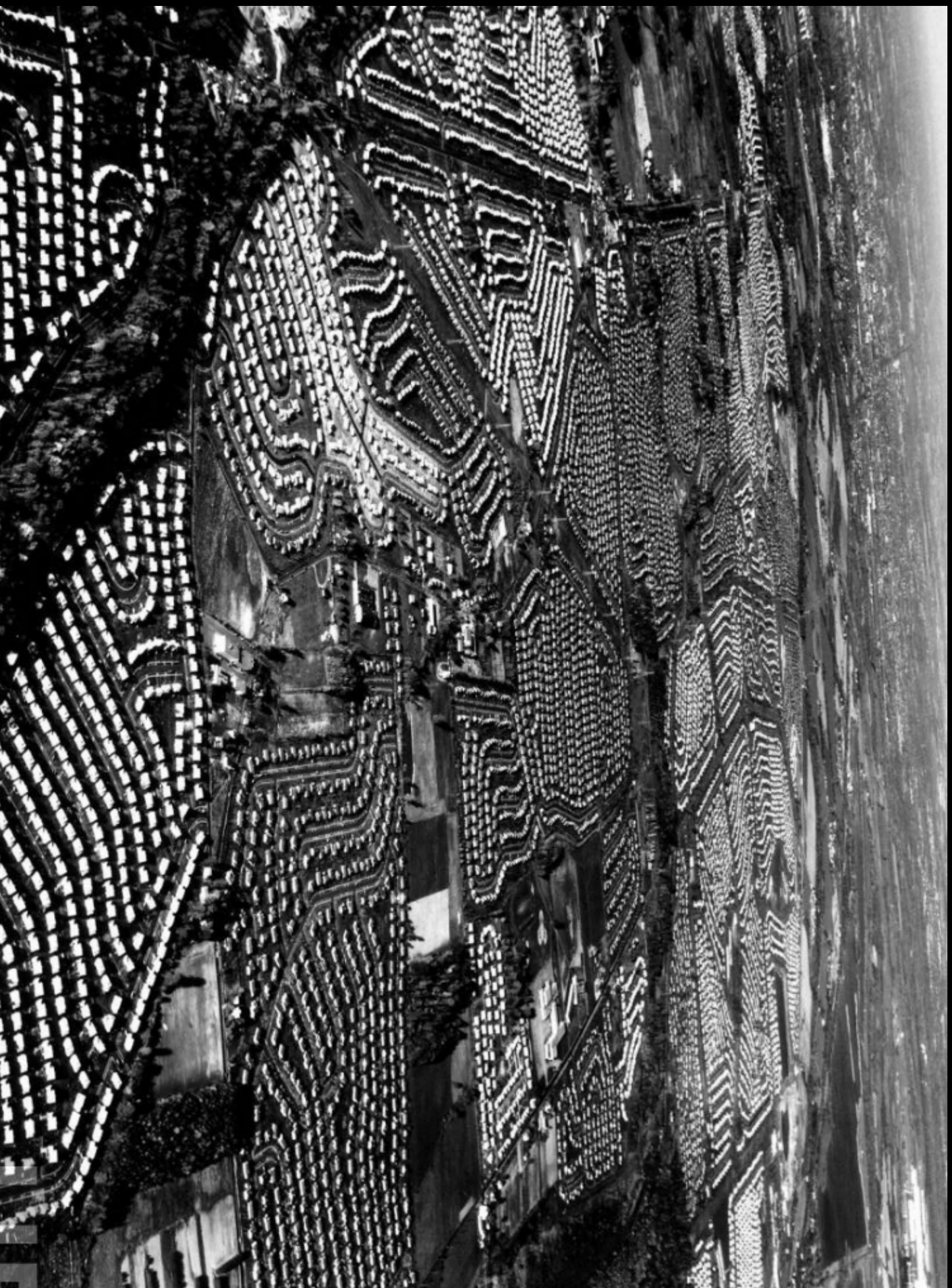


*Slash, 2017*





Levitown, PA (1958 )



1953 Aerial Photo of Levittown, PA



Levittown, PA, 1948



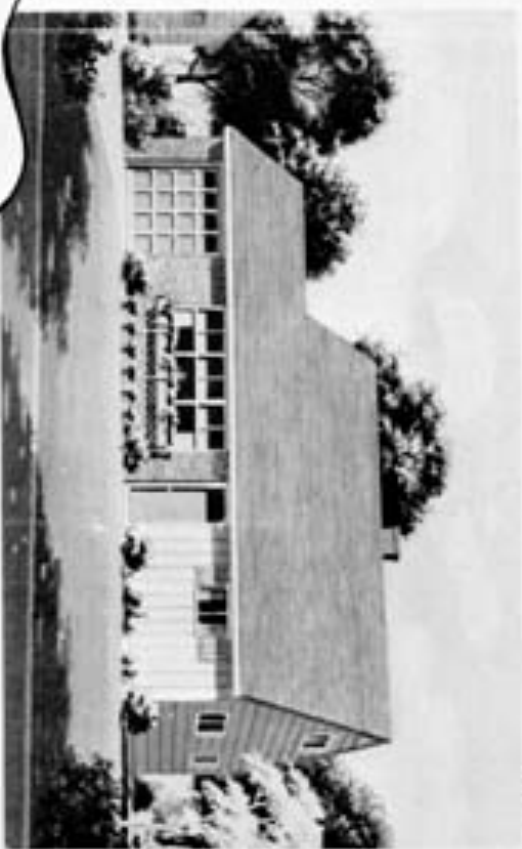
*Endangered Abundance, 2016*



No. 1



No. 2



*Announcing*

*The 1956  
Jubilee*

Price \$11,600

No. 3



No. 4



Levittown, PA, 1956



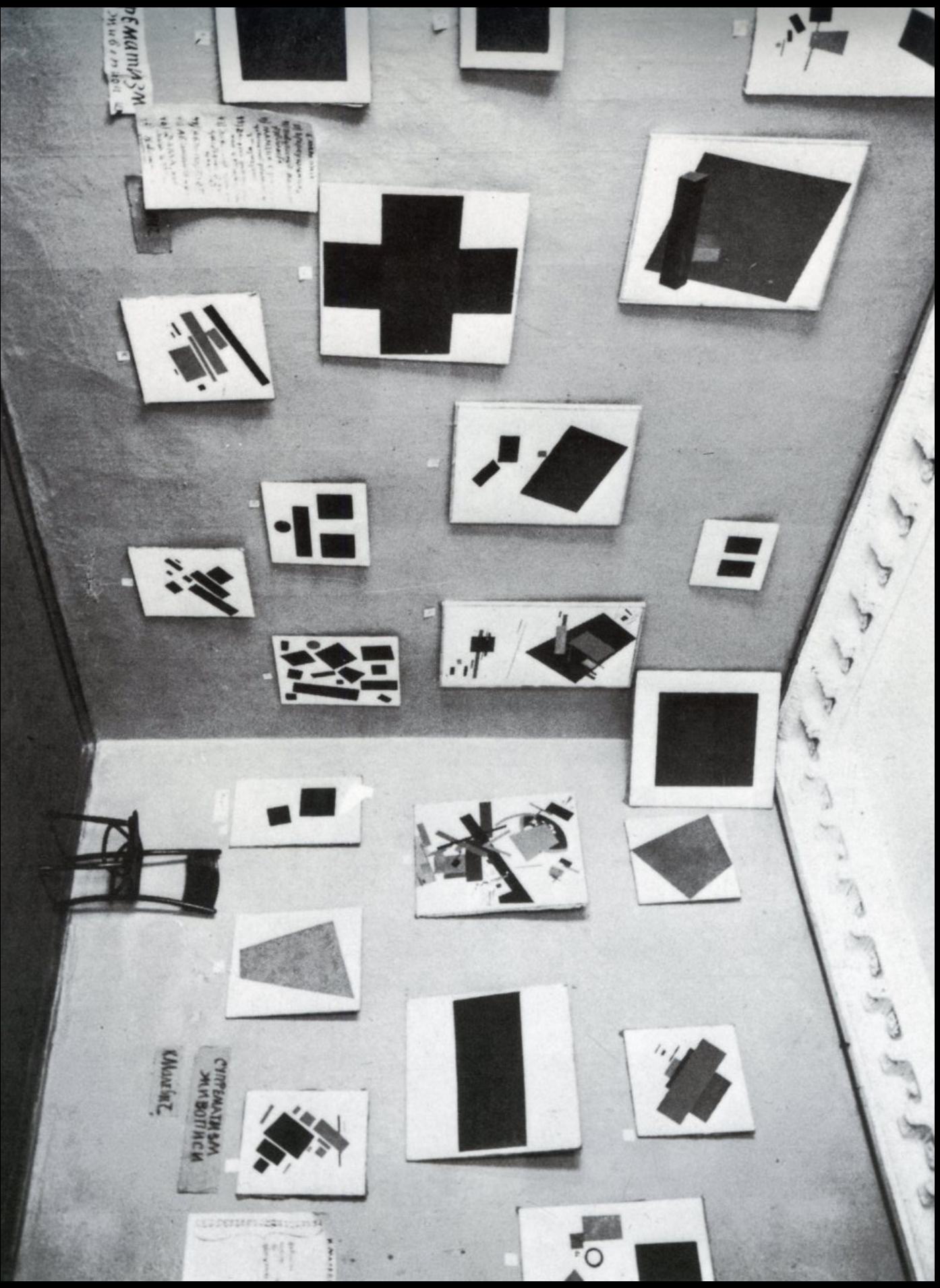


Own, 2016

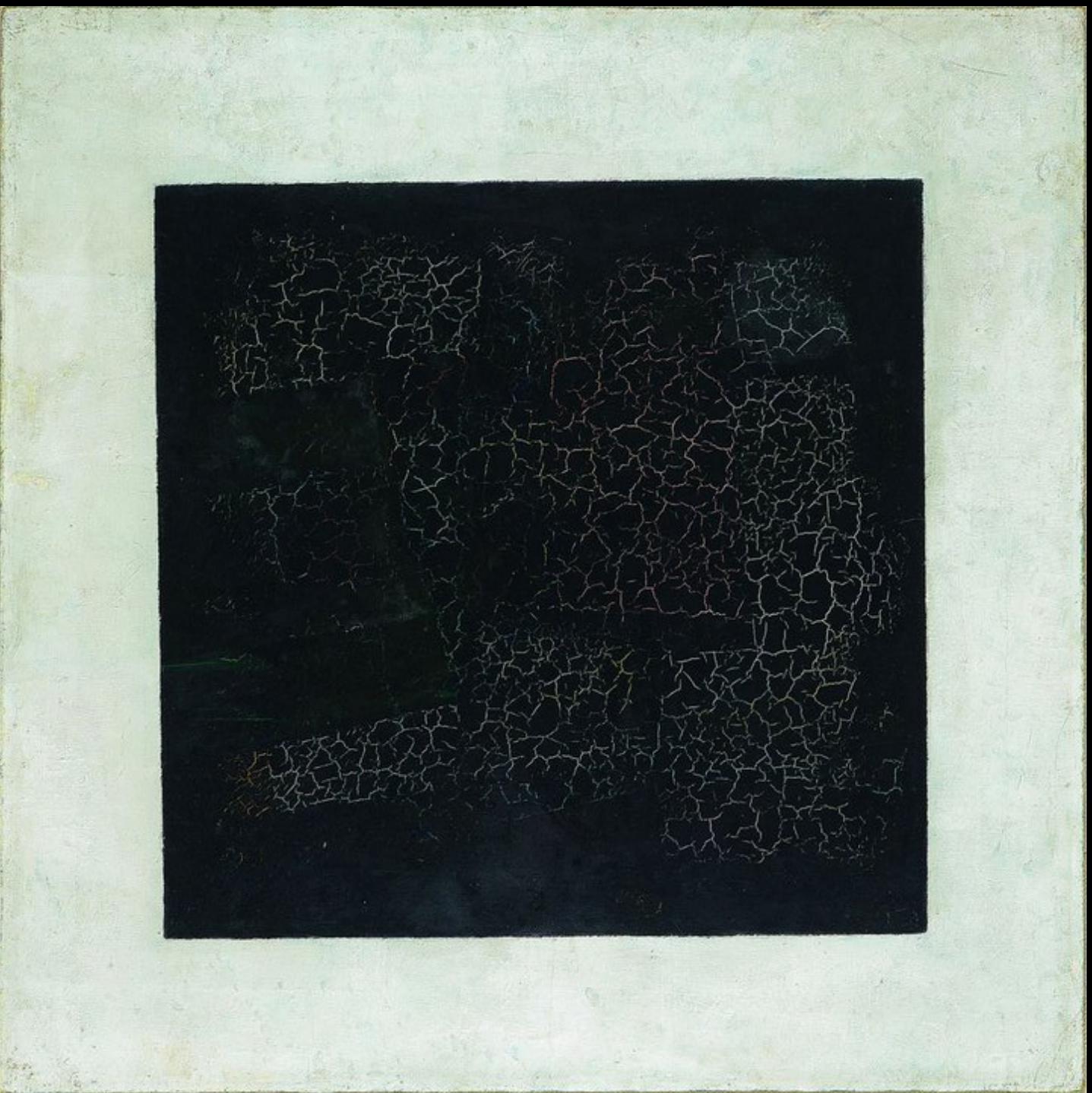
*Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss?*  
(installation), 2018







0.10. The Last Futurist Exhibition of Paintings, 1915



*Black Square*, Kasimir Malevich, 1913



*Crutch, 2017*





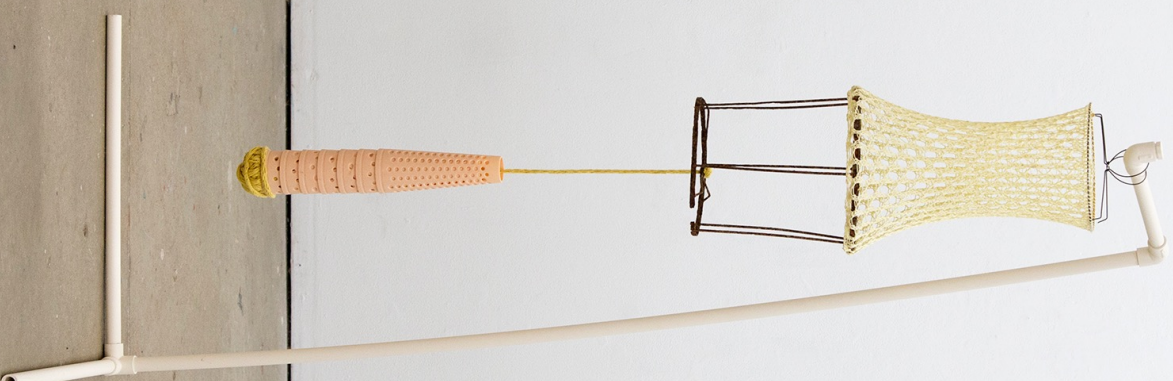
*Cuff and Ingredient, 2018*



“We begin to confront the thingness of objects when they stop working for us: when the drill breaks, when the car stalls, when the window gets filthy when their flow within the circuits of production and distribution, consumption and exhibition, has been arrested, however momentarily. The story of objects asserting themselves as things, then, is the story of a changed relationship to the human subject and thus the story of how the thing really names less an object than a particular subject-object relation.” -

Bill Brown

Neuralgia, 2018





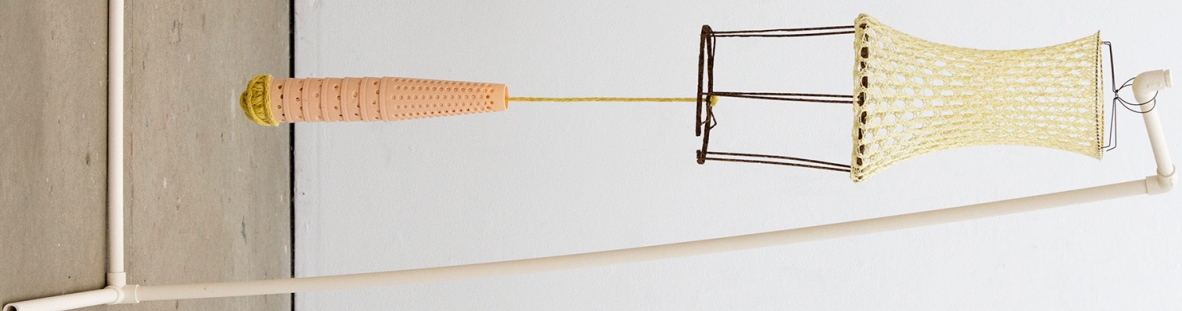


*Neuralgia (detail), 2018*



*Neuralgia (detail), 2018*





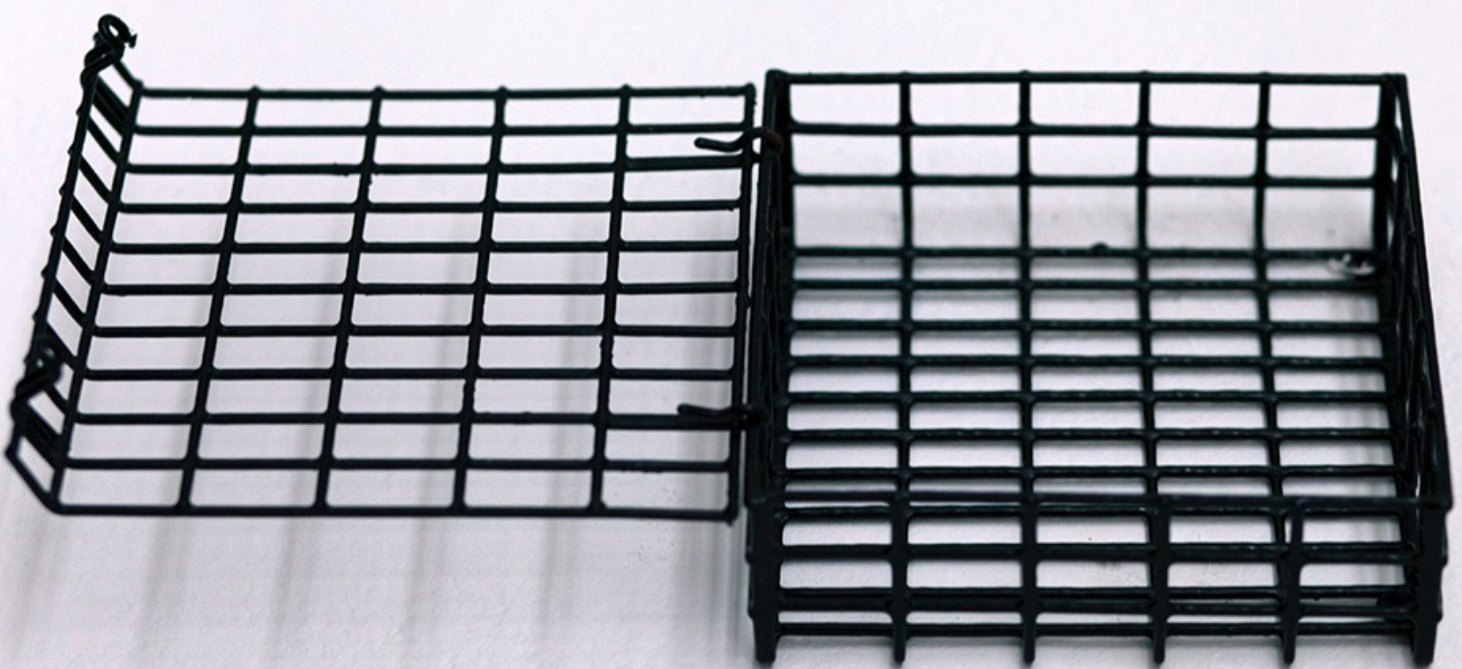
Neuralgia, 2018



*Untitled (Ladder), Virginia Overton, 2010*



Souvenir, 2017





*Bicycle Wheel, Marcel Duchamp, 1951*





*Head, David Hammons, 2004*



*Gift, Man Ray, 1958*

*Respond, 2018*





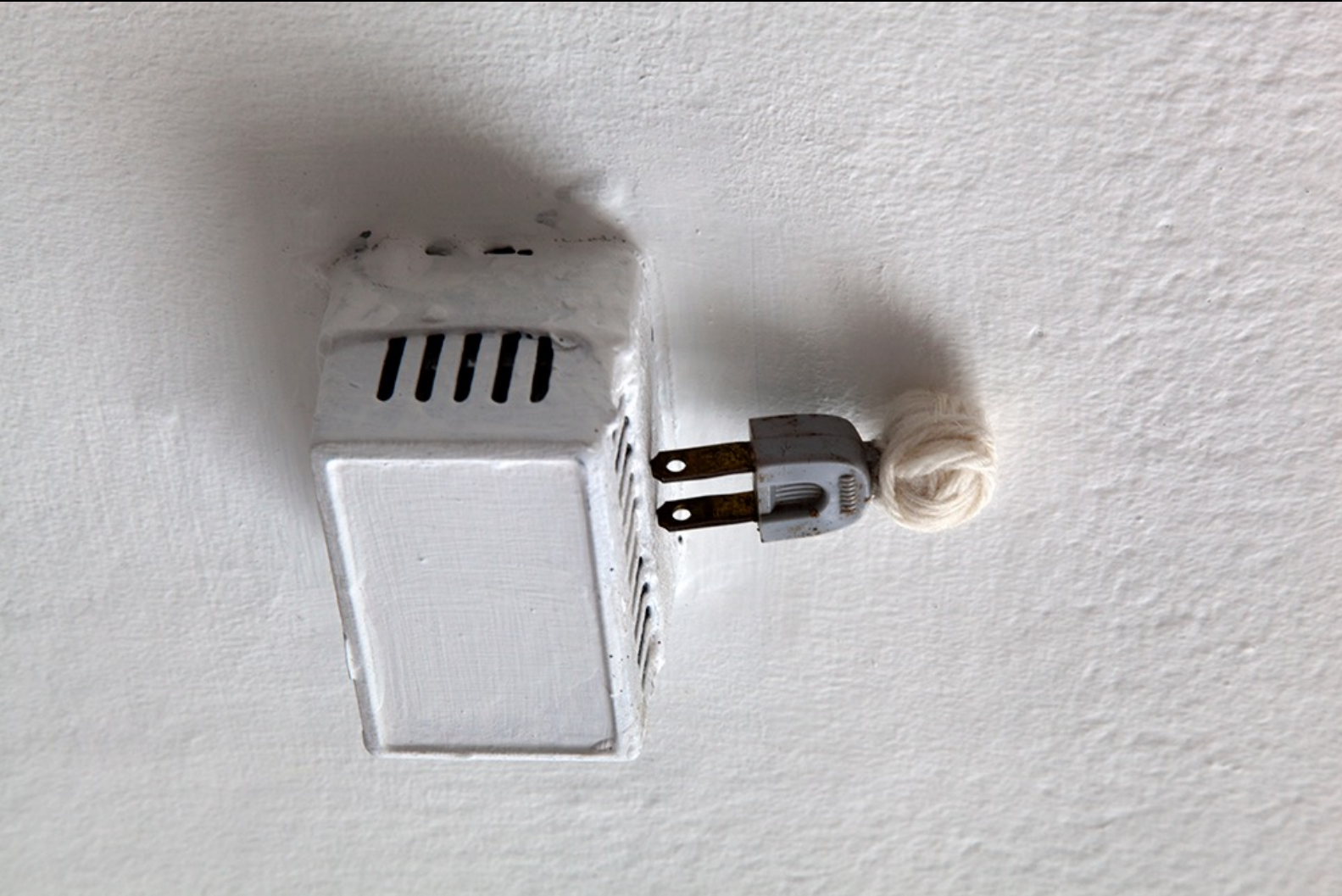


Waning, 2017



*Outpost, 2018*





Mascot, 2018



*Ideal Viewing Distance, 2018*



*Ideal Viewing Distance, 2018*







*Ideal Viewing Distance, 2018*





Untitled, 2017



Owñ, 2016



*Six Jugs of Blush,*  
Amanda Ross-Ho, 2010





*Blue Glove Right #3,*  
Amanda Ross-Ho, 2015



*Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss?*  
(*Installation*), 2018





*Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss? (Installation), 2018*



*Not Quite, 2018*





*Not Quite (detail)* , 2018





*Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss? (installation), 2018*



*Waning (detail), 2017*





*Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss? (installation), 2018*



*Is a Call to Pleasure a Loss? (installation), 2018*





Thank You